

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Amended) A synthetic gene which is capable of [modifying] delaying, repressing or otherwise reducing [target gene] the expression of a target gene in [a] an animal cell, [tissue or organ of a prokaryotic or eukaryotic organism] which is transfected [or transformed therewith] with said synthetic gene, wherein said synthetic gene [at least] comprises a structural gene sequence comprising a nucleotide sequence which is substantially identical to [the nucleotide sequence of] said target gene or a derivative of said target gene [thereof or a complementary sequence thereto], wherein said structural gene sequence is placed operably in the sense orientation under the control of a promoter sequence which is operable in said cell[,tissue or organ].

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2. (Amended) A synthetic gene which is capable of [modifying] delaying, repressing or otherwise reducing the expression of a target gene in [a] an animal cell, [tissue or organ of a prokaryotic or eukaryotic organism] which is transfected [or transformed therewith] with said synthetic gene, wherein said synthetic gene [at least] comprises multiple structural gene sequences, wherein each of said structural gene sequences comprises a nucleotide sequence which is substantially identical to [the nucleotide sequence of] said target gene or a derivative of said target gene [thereof or complementary sequence thereto] and wherein said multiple structural gene sequences are placed operably under the control of a single promoter sequence which is operable in said cell, [tissue or organ] wherein at least one of said structural gene sequences is placed operably in the sense orientation under the control of said promoter sequence.

3. (Amended) A synthetic gene which is capable of [modifying] delaying, repressing or otherwise reducing the expression of a target gene in [a] an animal cell, [tissue or organ of a prokaryotic or eukaryotic organism] which is transfected [or transformed therewith] with said synthetic gene, wherein said synthetic gene [at least] comprises multiple structural gene sequences wherein each of said structural gene sequences is separately placed [operably] under the control of a promoter [sequence] which is operable in said cell, [tissue or organ] and wherein each of said structural gene sequences comprises a nucleotide sequence

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which is substantially identical to [the nucleotide sequence of] said target gene or a derivative of said target gene [thereof or complementary sequence thereto], wherein at least one of said structural gene sequences is placed operably in the sense orientation under the control of an individual promoter sequence.

4. (Amended) A genetic construct which is capable of [modifying] delaying, repressing or otherwise reducing the expression of an endogenous gene or target gene in [a] an animal [transformed or transfected] cell which is transfected with said genetic construct, [tissue or organ] wherein said genetic construct [at least] comprises the synthetic gene of [the invention] any one of claims 1-3 and at least one of [one or more origins] an origin of replication [and/or] or a selectable marker gene [sequences].

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Please add the following claims:

34. A synthetic gene which is capable of delaying, repressing or otherwise reducing the expression of a target gene in an animal cell which is transfected with said synthetic gene, wherein said synthetic gene comprises multiple structural gene sequences, wherein each of said structural gene sequences comprises a nucleotide sequence which is substantially identical to said target gene or a derivative of said target gene, and wherein said multiple structural gene sequences are placed operably under the control of a single promoter sequence which is operable in said cell, wherein at least one of said structural gene sequences is placed operably in the sense orientation under the control of said promoter sequence and wherein at least one other of said structural gene sequences is placed operably in the antisense orientation under the control of said promoter sequence.

35. A synthetic gene which is capable of delaying, repressing or otherwise reducing the expression of a target gene in an animal cell which is transfected with said synthetic gene, wherein said synthetic gene comprises multiple structural gene sequences and each of said structural gene sequences is separately placed under the control of a promoter which is operable in said cell, and wherein each of said structural gene sequences comprises a nucleotide sequence which is substantially identical to said target gene or a derivative of said

target gene, wherein at least one of said structural gene sequences is placed operably in the sense orientation under the control of an individual promoter sequence, and wherein at least one other of said structural gene sequences is placed operably in the antisense orientation under the control of another individual promoter sequence.

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36. A synthetic gene which is capable of delaying, repressing or otherwise reducing the expression of a target gene in an animal cell which is transfected with said synthetic gene, wherein said synthetic gene comprises multiple structural gene sequences, wherein each of said structural gene sequences comprises a nucleotide sequence which is substantially identical to said target gene or a derivative of said target gene, and wherein said multiple structural gene sequences are placed operably under the control of a single promoter sequence which is operable in said cell, wherein at least one of said structural gene sequences is placed operably in the sense orientation under the control of said promoter sequence, wherein at least one other of said structural gene sequences is placed operably in the antisense orientation under the control of said promoter sequence, and wherein at least one structural gene sequence that is placed in the sense orientation relative to said promoter and at least one structural gene sequence that is placed in the antisense orientation relative to said promoter are spaced from each other by a nucleic acid stuffer fragment.

37. The synthetic gene of claim 36, wherein at least one structural gene sequence that is in the sense orientation relative to the promoter, said stuffer fragment and at least one structural gene sequence that is in the antisense orientation relative to the promoter form an interrupted palindrome.

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38. A cell comprising the synthetic gene of any one of claims 1-3 or 35-37.

39. A cell comprising a genetic construct which is capable of delaying, repressing or otherwise reducing the expression of an endogenous gene or target gene in an animal cell which is transfected with said genetic construct, wherein said genetic construct comprises the synthetic gene of any one of claims 1-3 or 35-37 and at least one of an origin of replication or a selectable marker gene.

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40. A method of delaying or repressing the expression of a target gene in an animal cell, comprising transfecting said animal cell with a synthetic gene, wherein said synthetic gene comprises a structural gene comprising a nucleotide sequence which is substantially identical to the nucleotide sequence of said target gene or a derivative of said target gene, wherein said structural gene is placed operably in the sense orientation under the control of a promoter which is operable in said cell, thereby delaying or repressing the expression of said target gene in said animal cell.

41. A method of delaying or repressing the expression of a target gene in an animal cell, comprising transfecting said animal cell with a synthetic gene, wherein said synthetic gene comprises multiple structural genes, wherein each of said structural genes comprises a nucleotide sequence which is substantially identical to the nucleotide sequence of said target gene or a derivative of said target gene, and wherein said multiple structural genes are placed operably under the control of a single promoter sequence which is operable in said cell, wherein at least one of said structural genes is placed operably in the sense orientation under the control of said promoter sequence.

42. The method according to claim 41, wherein at least one other of said structural genes is placed operably in the antisense orientation under the control of said promoter sequence.

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43. The method according to claim 42, wherein at least one structural gene sequence that is placed in the sense orientation relative to said promoter and at least one structural gene sequence that is placed in the antisense orientation relative to said promoter are spaced from each other by a nucleic acid stuffer fragment.

44. The method according to claim 43, wherein at least one structural gene sequence that is placed in the sense orientation relative to said promoter, said stuffer fragment, and at least one structural gene sequence that is placed in the antisense orientation relative to said promoter form an interrupted palindrome.